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PEOPLES Temple

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October 27, 1977

Honorable Forbes Burnham
Prime Minister
Georgetown, Guyana.
South America

Dear Mr. Burnham:

I want to share with you a matter of great concern to me.

The concept of a politically motivated conspiracy directed against an individual or organization in an attempt to discredit and destroy one's effectiveness in the political and social arena should be utterly foreign to a democratic society. Unfortunately, however, such is not the case.

Having myself been the subject of an ungrounded attack by the media and other agencies, I have first hand experience as to how such campaigns against outspoken persons are launched and carried forward.

Recently, the Lieutenant Governor of Colorado, Lieutenant Governor George Brown, and I joined the National Association of Human Rights Workers to announce the publication of an exhaustive study of organized efforts in the United States to discredit black elected officials. In looking at the extensive body of data compiled after two years of careful research, the picture is unmistakably clear that conspiracies against black and third world people are very real and serve to blunt the effectiveness of any person trying to represent the interest of third world people.

One such person to whom the media and several agencies of government have deliberately and concertedly focussed their resources is one of the most committed activists and finest human beings I know--Reverend Jim Jones. Reverend Jones is the leader of a multi-ethnic, multi-facted, many thousand member organization known as People's Temple. It is one of the most significant forces today in the area of human rights, social change and concrete service work.

It is my belief that by the year 1980 the minority population in California alone will reach the 60% mark. People's Temple is a working solution to the problem that California can anticipate in the not so far distant future. People's Temple has managed to effectively organize minority and caucasians as well, into a viable, progressive force.

A noteworthy feature of the Temple's program is its compassionate emphasis on the needs of the ever growing senior population. This emphasis accurately reflects the shifting age curve of the future and meets that need with kindness not condescension.

Beyond that, Reverend Jones and People's Temple have helped every person who in recent years has been oppressed or jailed fundamentally because of his or her political beliefs. Jim has never been reticent to speak his beliefs in non-violent causes.

It is my confirmed opinion that this outspoken stance coupled with the undeniable size and effectiveness of his organization, has made him a target of the most gruelling and vicious conspiracy yet witnessed.

That which I know to be obvious, lies and frame-up, are presented to the public as thoroughly proven facts. Interestingly enough, the scurrilous nature of these lies were meted out to papers in those cities throughout the world which has the highest concentration of Carribean and, in particular, Guyanese residents. By doing so, the organizers of this conspiracy hoped to have such information filter into Guyana where Reverend Jones has established a remarkable and highly successful model community which I personally have visited. I found that visit to be one of the most rewarding experiences of my life.

One of the key figures in this cruel scenario is a man with a well documented criminal background who has been described by several correctional specialists as a "con man" with an insatiable desire for money and notoriety. Also involved is a high priced public relations firm whose job is to map out campaigns to discredit Reverend Jones and feed information prepackaged to a supposedly free and "objective" press.

It is clear to me that a phenomenal amount of money is being spent by this conspiracy in an attempt to destabilize the agricultural project in Guyana and to apparently, bring about the elimination of Reverend Jones.

Evidence currently being gathered points clearly to right wing forces of the first magnitude. One such force is known to have political affiliation with those remnants of the Nazis who continue

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to permeate the fabric of American society to a degree that would shock people unfamiliar with the growing move to the radical right in the United States.

In fact, the last time I visited the San Francisco Headquarters of the People's Temple several weeks ago, a large Nazi rally was taking place in the nearby city of San Jose. It was covered extensively by all media. Klu Klux Klan chapters continue to grow and flourish in all parts of the United States. It is likely that the Panama Treaty will be defeated as a result of the well financed campaign against its passage. These are but a few examples to give you some idea of the current trend.

As a native of Trinidad, my bonds with the Caribbean are close and everlasting. I feel a certain responsibility to apprise you of my thoughts on Jim Jones and my interpretation of what I have seen of the attack on him and his organization in the past months. Jim is a deeply loyal and sensitive person and he is a man who stands by his word and by those who look to him for guidance and leadership. It is this kind of loyalty that makes him a man to be trusted. I know for a fact that he will stand by his commitment to Guyana just as firmly as he now stands by his commitment to any one of his children.

I look forward to future visits to Guyana and extend to you my warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

MERVYN M. DYMALLY

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